

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00
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FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6243

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 4723

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR,KE

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: FARES BETWEEN US AND KENYA

REF: STATE 077395

1. EMBOFF MET WITH A.M. SHITAKHA, DEPUTY SECRETARY GOK MINISTRY OF POWER AND COMMUNICATIONS (MOPC), AND PASSED SUBSTANCE OF STATE 074620. DURING CONVERSATION SHITAKHA CONFIRMED IATA AGREEMENT ON NEW U.S.-KENYA GIT FARE REPORTED IN REFTEL. SHITAKHA SAID MOPC HAD BEEN THINKING OF A FARE SOMEWHERE AROUND 700 DOLLARS BUT MAY APPROVE NEW FARE AS AN INTERIM MEASURE. HE CONFIDED THAT CURRENT PREFERRED STRATEGY IN MOPC IS TO REJECT NEW FARE THEREBY CREATING DE FACTO OPEN RATE SITUATION. PROPONENTS OF THIS STRATEGY BELIEVE EXISTENCE OF OPEN RATE SITUATION WILL MAKE PAN AM MORE RECEPTIVE TO NEGOTIATING WITH GOK. SHITAKHA SAID FINAL DECISION ON NEW FARE WILL PROBABLY BE MADE BY APRIL 1.

2. SHITAKHA APPRECIATED INFORMATION IN STATE 074620 AND UNDERSTANDS NECESSITY OF REOPENING DISCUSSIONS WITH PAN AM. HE AND REPRESENTATIVE FROM MINISTRY OF TOURISM (PROBABLY DEPUTY SECRETARY J. ILLAKO) BELIEVE VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES PRIMARILY FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH PAN AM OFFICIALS WOULD BE WORTHWHILE. SHITAKHA SAID LOCAL PAN AM REPRESENTATIVE

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TATIVE OUT OF COUNTRY UNTIL APRIL 7. THEREFORE, DISCUSSIONS LOCALLY ARE NOT POSSIBLE UNTIL AFTER THAT DATE. IN ADDITION, SHITAKHA SAID CURRENT ATTITUDE IN MOPC IS THAT FARE DECISION WILL BE MADE BY PAN AM IN THE U.S. AND GOK SHOULD PRESENT ITS CASE DIRECTLY TO U.S. DECISION MAKERS IN PAN AM.

3. EMBOFF TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO CONVINCE SHITAKHA TO TRY AGAIN TO DISCUSS FARES WITH PAN AM NAIROBI. SHITAKHA SAID THERE WAS TOO MUCH OPPOSITION WITHIN HIS MINISTRY AND TOO MUCH PRESSURE FROM TOURISM MINISTRY FOR HIM TO RENEW DISCUSSIONS HERE. HE SAID THAT MOPC MUST DEAL WITH DECISION MAKING OFFICIALS AT PAN AM DIRECTLY.

4. EMBOFF ADVISED SHITAKHA TO CABLE KENYAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON REQUESTING THEY ARRANGE DISCUSSIONS WITH PAN AM OFFICIALS. SHITAKHA REQUESTS DEPARTMENT ASSISTANCE IN HELPING KENYAN EMBASSY ARRANGE MEETING WITH APPROPRIATE PAN AM OFFICIALS. EMBOFF DID NOT COMMIT DEPARTMENT TO ANY COURSE OF ACTION AGREED TO RELAY SHITAKHA'S REQUEST. SHITAKHA SAID HE WOULD REQUEST MEETING SOMETIME AROUND APRIL 4 AND, WHILE HE IS AWARE OF WORK CONSTRAINTS ON DEPARTMENT OFFICERS, WOULD APPRECIATE OPPORTUNITY TO BRIEF DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS AFTER MEETING WITH PAN AM.
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